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# Role of advertisements and short agricultural messages telecast on PTV in dissemination of agricultural technologies

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## Abstract

This empirical study was conducted in Nasirabad district of Balochistan to assess the farmer's perception and effectiveness of advertisements and short agricultural messages telecast on Pakistan Television (PTV). The results of the study showed that fair majority (59.17% and 53.33%) of the respondents got information about fertilizers and weedicides respectively from Television (TV) whereas contribution of TV with regard to dissemination of information about farm machinery and livestock was almost nil. The majority (71.67%) of the respondents opined that advertisements should be presented in the form of drama. The data further showed that 47.50% of the respondents regard the advertisements by the private agencies as moderately effective whereas about one-fourth (22.50%) of the respondents regarded them as very effective. The data regarding level of awareness about short messages telecast by government agencies revealed that slightly less than fifty (46.67%) of the respondents were found to be having a medium level of awareness. The data further showed that about one-fourth of the respondents were having low level of awareness of short messages telecast on TV by government agencies. The data regarding level of adoption of short messages showed that level of adoption of 52.50% of the respondents was medium ranging from 12-15 messages while only 21.67% of the respondents had low level of adoption ranging from 8-11 messages.

**Keywords:** Television, advertisements, short agricultural messages, farmer's perception, Pakistan.

## Introduction

Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for the rural population and ensures food availability to rural and urban inhabitants. It's a key sector of the economy as it provides raw materials to main industrial units of the country and also plays a major contribution in export earning of the country (Govt. of Pak., 2014). The agriculture sector accounts for 20.9% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and is a source of livelihood of 43.5% of rural population (Govt. of Pak., 2015). In spite of such a great importance, agriculture is developing at a very low speed in Pakistan (Rehman *et al*., 2013 and Ahmed *et al*., 2016) and average per hectare yield of various crops is far less than that obtained in many other countries of the world (FAO, 2008). Even within the country, there is a big gap between the potential and average yield of different

crops, which implies that the available technologies, if properly communicated to and adopted by the farmers, have the potential to enhance agriculture production manifold. This puts a great responsibility on the extension agencies/organizations to communicate the latest agricultural technologies among the ultimate users. Effective communication of improved technologies is one of the most important factors of agricultural development (Manandhar, 1990, Muhammad *et al*., 2004 and Aziz *et al*., 2015).

Agricultural extension, which is essentially a message delivery system, has a major role to play in agricultural development. It serves as a source of advice and assistance for farmers to help them improving their production and marketing (Adam, 1988). The task of extension education is accomplished by different extension methods/media, which may come under individual, group and mass contact. Individual and group contact methods have limited scope in this context while mass contact methods are more effective to disseminate the agricultural information among the farming community (Muhammad, 2005 and Muhammad *et al*., 2012).

Mass media such as radio, TV and printed materials are used to reach large number of people quickly. These methods are particularly useful in making large number of people aware of new ideas and practices, or alerting them to sudden emergencies. According to a study conducted in central Punjab, majority (76%) of the farmers had radio and TV sets. However, more than 56% farmers of the study area listened/watched agricultural programmes on radio and TV respectively (Abbas *et al.*, 2003a). Within the mass media, TV seems to be the most effective and efficient medium used to disseminate agricultural information among the farming community. It can be used as an effective teaching tool in agricultural extension. Much of its success in teaching lies in the fact that it involves both audio and visual presentation. This combined effect of audio and visual signals increases the effectiveness of message and strengthens the likelihood of learning. It can provide information very easily to a large audience dispersed over a wide geographical area, which is impossible through personal contacts.

In Pakistan, TV as a communication medium in respect of disseminating agricultural technologies to the farming community is being used efficiently. Various daily and weekly agricultural programmes are telecast on behalf of both public and private “sectors. These programs include Kisan Time” & “Haryali”.

In addition to these programmes, short messages are also important forms of agricultural TV telecasts which provide brief and comprehensive information to farmers. Advertisements relevant to agriculture are for the promotion of their products (seed, fertilizer, pesticides etc.) and at the same time act as source of agricultural information for the intended audience (Khan *et al*., 2010). In Balochistan, these programs (Kisan Time & Haryali), advertisements delivered by the private agencies and the timely short messages telecast on TV by Government of the Balochistan. In fact a huge amount of money is being spent on these programs to achieve the purpose of educating and equipping farmers with latest production technologies and techniques. Thus there exists a dire need to critically analyze the role of advertisements and short agricultural messages telecast on PTV in the dissemination of agricultural technologies among the farming community. The results of this study would be helpful to identify the strengths and weaknesses of TV as a communication medium and to suggest measures for its improvement.

## Materials and Methods

This study was conducted in Nasirabad district of Balochistan province (Pakistan). Out of twenty four union councils, five were selected randomly and from each selected union council two villages were selected at random. From each sample village twelve farmers (having their own TV sets) were taken through simple random sampling technique, thus forming a sample of 120 respondents. The data were collected with the help of pre-tested interview schedule and statistically analyzed with the help of SPSS and thus drawn conclusions.

## Results and Discussion

### *Attention paid by the respondents to the advertisements and short messages*

All (100%) respondents paid attention to the private agencies’ advertisements as well as the short agricultural messages by the government agencies telecast on PTV. The respondents were further asked about the suitability of the time of the advertisements by the private agencies and short agricultural messages by the government agencies. The data showed that all the respondents regarded the time of the advertisements by private agencies and short agricultural messages by the government agencies as suitable.

### *Short messages/advertisements telecast by private agencies*

A large number of national and multinational private agencies in Pakistan are engaged in agricultural business dealing with pesticide, weedicides, improved seeds etc. in fact every agency/company is spending a lot of money for the advertisement of its products due to a tough competition in market. They use various information sources to convey the messages about their products to the farming community. TV seems to be an important medium used by these agencies for this purpose. They telecast their short messages/advertisements through TV. The opinion of the farmers about such messages/advertisements seems to be an important area to look into. Data in this regard were collected, which are presented in **Tables 1-5**.

**Table 1: Specific information got by the respondents through short agricultural messages/advertisements of the private agencies**

| ***Specific agricultural information*** | ***f*** | ***%*** |
|---|---|---|
| Crop varieties | 13 | 10.83 |
| Weedicides | 64 | 53.33 |
| Fertilizer | 71 | 59.17 |
| Farm Machinery | 04 | 3.33 |
| Pesticide | 46 | 38.33 |
| Livestock | 06 | 5.00 |

**Table 1** depicts that a fair majority (59.17% and 53.33%) of the respondents got information about fertilizer and weedicides respectively from TV. Pesticide appeared to be the other major area covered by TV as indicated by 38.3% of the respondents. 10.83% of the respondents got information regarding crop varieties through short messages of private agencies through TV. The contribution of TV with regard to dissemination of information about farm machinery and livestock was almost nil (3.33%). The results regarding pesticides and weedicides are partially related with those of Ashraf (2001) who found that 45% of the respondents reported that Novartis Company used TV for the popularization of its products (pesticides& weedicides).

**Table 2: Opinion of the respondents regarding the forms in which short agricultural messages/advertisements should be presented by the private agencies**

| ***Opinion*** | ***f*** | ***%*** |
|---|---|---|
| In the form of talks | 19 | 15.83 |
| In the form of drama | 86 | 71.67 |
| In musical form | 15 | 12.50 |
| **Total** | **120** | **100** |

**Table 2** reflects that majority (71.67%) of the respondents were of the view that the advertisements should be presented in the form of drama. Only 15.83 and 12.50% of the respondents pointed out that advertisements should be in the form of talks and music respectively.

**Table 3: Perceptions of the respondents about the effectiveness of short messages/advertisements by the private agencies**

| ***Perception*** | ***f*** | ***%*** |
|---|---|---|
| Very effective | 27 | 22.50 |
| Moderately | 57 | 47.50 |
| Less effective | 31 | 25.83 |
| Ineffective | 05 | 4.17 |
| **Total** | **120** | **100** |

It is clear from **Table 3** that slightly less than fifty (47.50%) of the respondents regard the advertisements by the private agencies as moderately effective. About one-fourth (22.50-25.83%) of the respondents regarded them as very and less effective. Only a few respondents (4.17%) ranked the advertisements ineffective.

***Short messages telecast on TV by the Department of Agriculture (Balochistan)***

Department of Agriculture (Balochistan) is also using TV to disseminate latest and timely information to the farming community in the form of short agricultural messages. These short messages may be highly admirable, useful, practicable and timely. To know about the awareness and adoption of these short agricultural messages telecast by the government agencies, the data were collected which are presented in **Table 4 and 5**.

**Table 4: Distribution of the respondents according to their level of awareness about the short agricultural messages telecast by government agencies**

| ***Level of awareness*** | ***f*** | ***%*** |
|---|---|---|
| High (21 to 24 messages) | 34 | 28.33 |
| Medium (17 to 20 messages) | 56 | 46.67 |
| Low (13-16 messages) | 30 | 25.00 |
| **Total** | **120** | **100** |

The data presented in **Table 4** reveals that slightly less than fifty (46.67%) of the respondents were found to be having a medium level of awareness while 28.33% of the respondents had high level of awareness. Only one-fourth (25.00%) of the respondents were having low level of awareness of short agricultural messages telecast on TV by government agencies.

**Table 5: Distribution of the respondents based on the level of adoption of the short agricultural messages telecast by the government agencies**

| ***Level of adoption*** | ***f*** | ***%*** |
|---|---|---|
| High(16-19 messages) | 31 | 25.83 |
| Medium (12-15 messages) | 63 | 52.50 |
| Low (8-11 messages) | 26 | 21.67 |
| **Total** | **120** | **100** |

It is quite clear from **Table 5** that the level of adoption of about half (52.50%) of the respondents was medium ranging from 12-15 messages while one-fourth (25.83%) of the respondents got high level of adoption ranging from 16-19 messages. Only 21.67% of the respondents had low level of adoption ranging from 8-11 messages.

## Conclusion

From the results of the study it is concluded that all (100%) of the respondents paid attention to the private agencies' advertisements as well as the short agricultural messages by the government agencies telecast on TV. More than half of the farmers got information about fertilizers and weedicides from TV while majority of the respondents were of the view that the advertisement should be presented in the form of drama. It is further concluded that less than half of the respondents regard the advertisement by the private agencies as moderately effective while less than one-fifth of the respondents ranked the advertisements ineffective. According to data regarding awareness and adoption level of short messages, it is concluded that 28.33% of the respondents had high level of awareness ranging from 21-24 messages whereas about one-fourth got high level of adoption ranging from 16-19 messages.

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